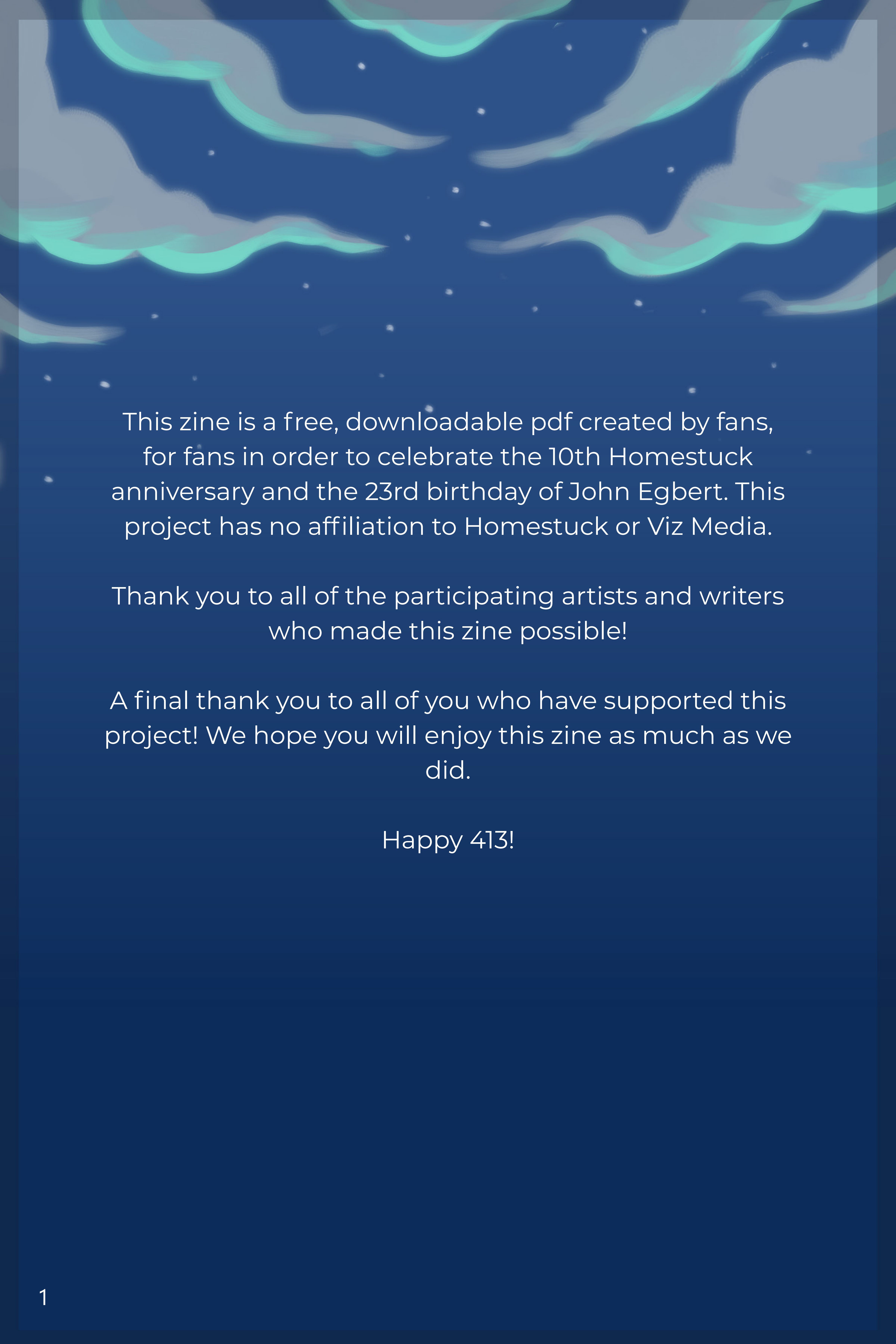




# WINDYZINE

A John Egbert Fanzine





This zine is a free, downloadable pdf created by fans, for fans in order to celebrate the 10th Homestuck anniversary and the 23rd birthday of John Egbert. This project has no affiliation to Homestuck or Viz Media.

Thank you to all of the participating artists and writers who made this zine possible!

A final thank you to all of you who have supported this project! We hope you will enjoy this zine as much as we did.

Happy 413!



4 / 13 / 19













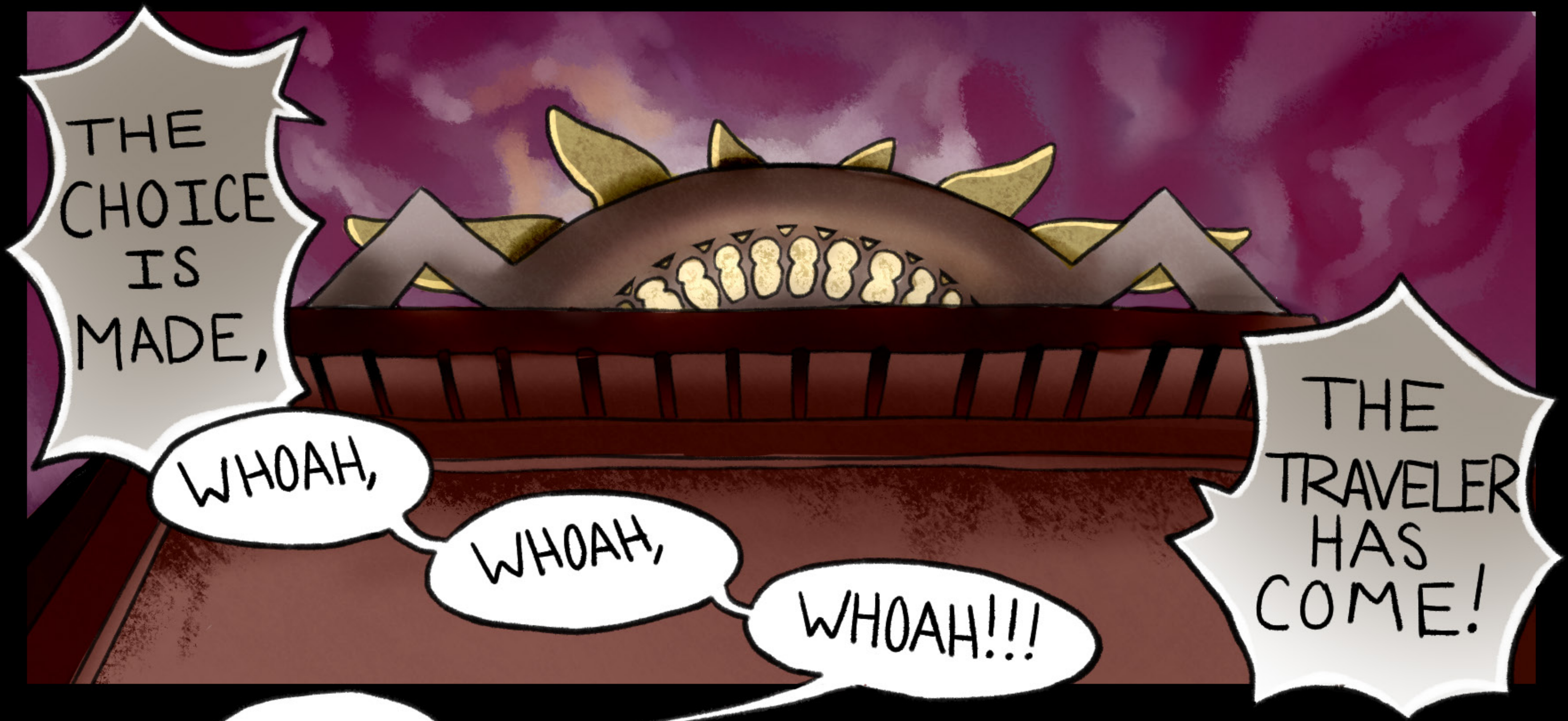




怪物大作战







THE  
CHOICE  
IS  
MADE,

WHOA,

WHOA,

WHOA!!!

THE  
TRAVELER  
HAS  
COME!



Nobody choosed  
anything!



NO- NO!

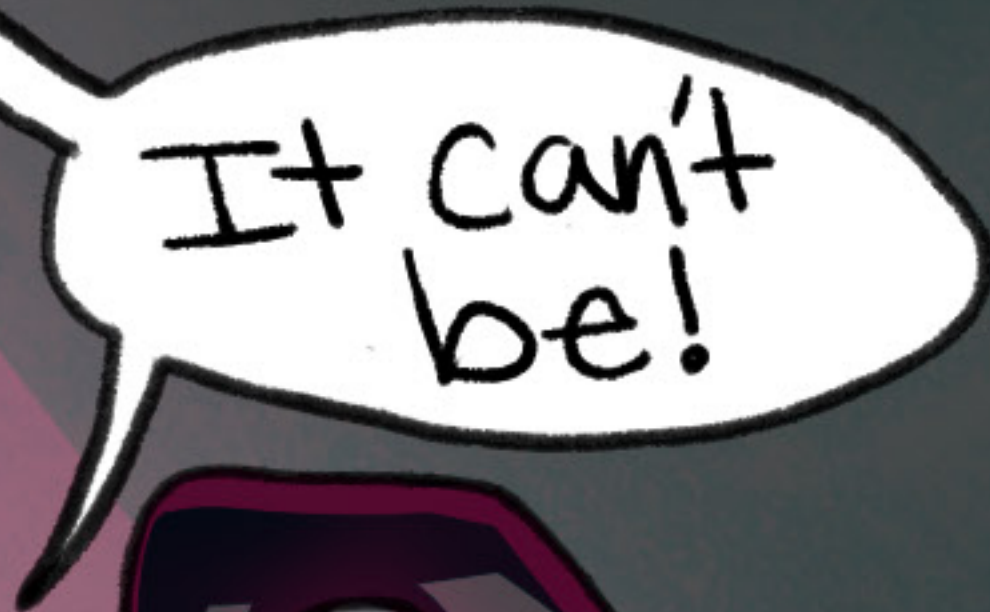
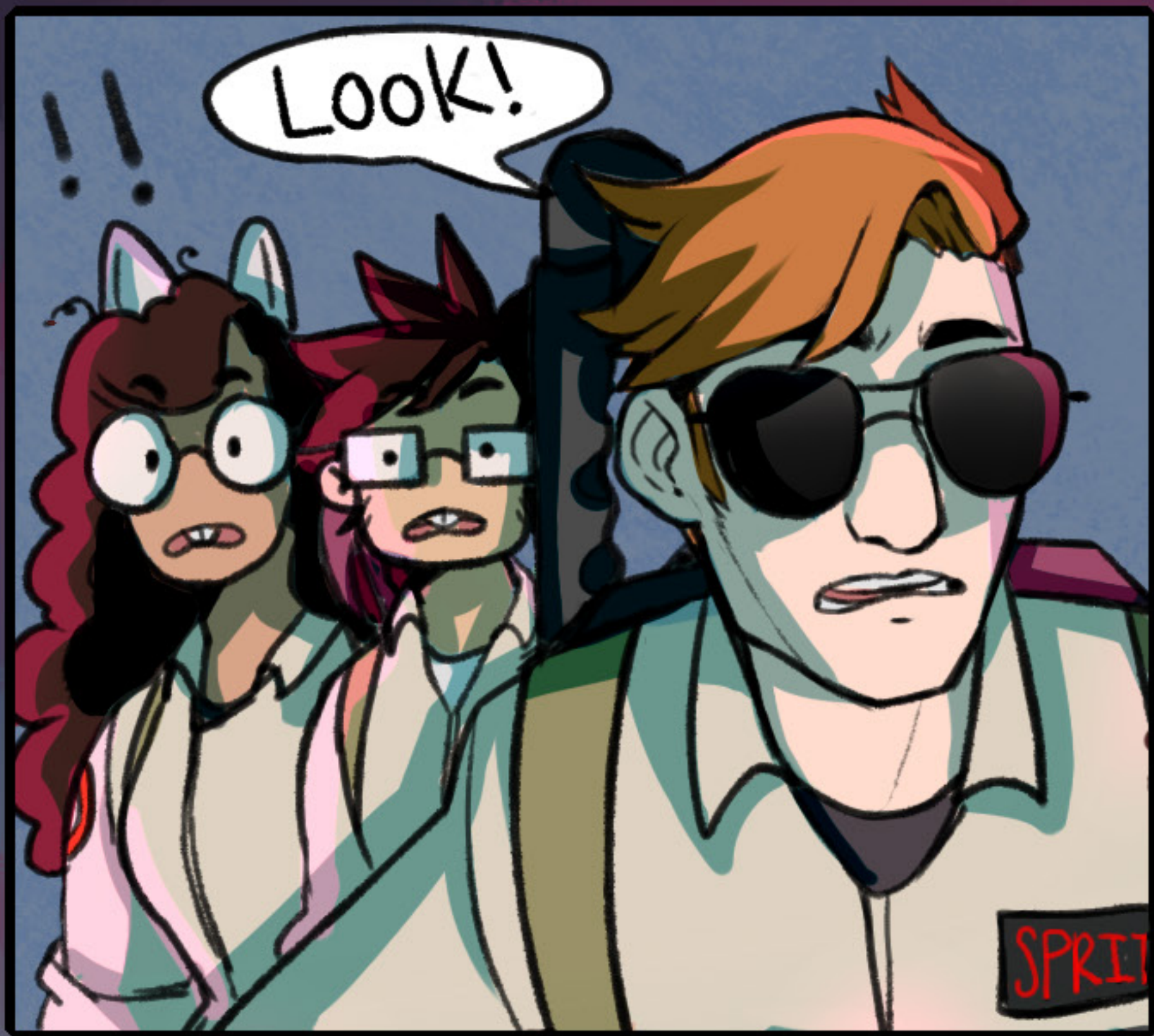
I didn't  
choose anything-  
Did you?!



I couldn't  
help it!

It just...  
popped in there.

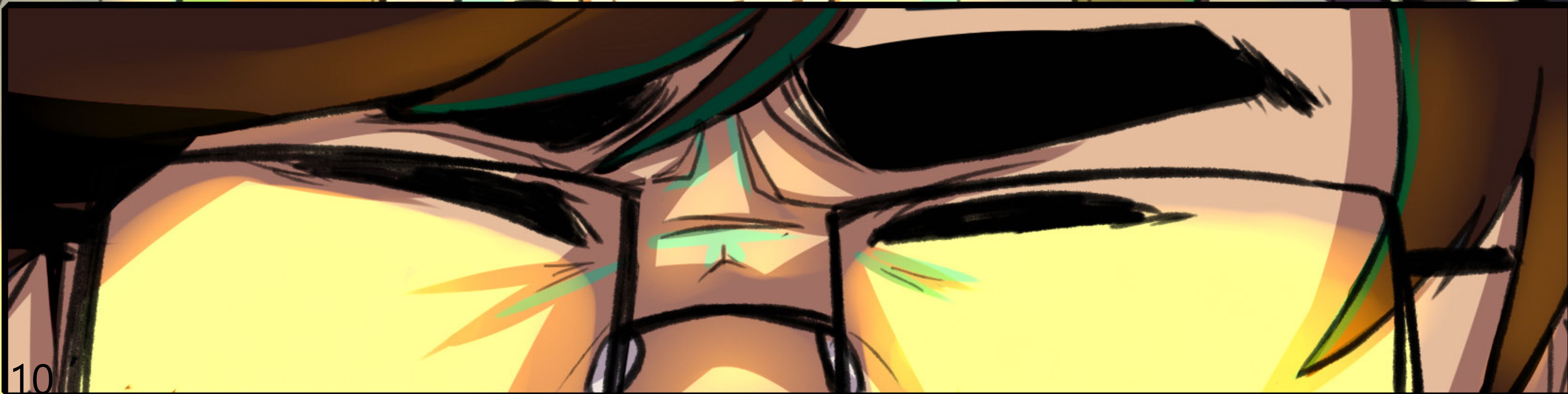






















## *John: Write a Letter*

by Cameron Rose

~~Dear Dad,~~

~~Hey, Dad,~~

~~Dad,~~

~~Dearest Father,~~

~~Esteemed patriarch,~~

~~Rose, stop fucking around, just let me write~~

Hi, Dad.

It's been a while, huh? Like, literally thousands of years. Can you believe it? I still can't. I mean, at this point I guess I'm used to it. It's just...not really what I expected my life to look like at 13. I don't think anyone would have expected it, but here we are - me and my best friends, conditionally immortal gods.

Does that even count as immortal? If you can still die, it's not really immortality, is it? I don't know. You end up with a lot of weird questions when you're somewhere between human and... I don't even know what to call it. I don't know a lot of things, honestly. It doesn't help that I remember less and less as time goes on. You'd think getting these super cool powers and stuff would make your brain and body better too, but I think mine are still human.

Maybe. Maybe not. Maybe living hundreds of times longer than you ever should have just does that to a person.

Sorry to be so depressing. I've changed a lot since everything happened. I guess I was going to anyways. I was a kid. We all were. I don't think any of us really understood what we were doing until it was too late to take it back. But I guess it wasn't really our fault, either. If it wasn't us, it was gonna be somebody else, and we would have just been blown away by meteors. Would that have been any better? I used to ask myself that a lot. Now, though, it's been so long, and... everyone here seems happy. I want to think we did something right. Something good.

Something to make up for all the pain. Something to make up for losing so many people we loved.

I don't know. Rose can call it destiny or fate or whatever, but I don't



think that changes anything. I don't mind it if it makes her feel better, though; I still just want to see everyone happy, more than anything. But don't get me wrong! She's still a great friend, just like everyone else. You know she was always the armchair psychologist type, but since all of Earth's knowledge exploded out of existence, she's kind of the best we've got. She's been trying really hard to help everybody work through their emotions and stuff. (That's another reason I think our brains are still human. As far as I know, real gods don't wake up screaming.)

She's the one who told me to write this letter. She said it's just to help me get my thoughts out, and grieve you the way I never really got a chance to. I don't know if it's working yet, but it's really nice to talk to you again, even if you'll never hear it. I don't even remember the last time I wrote a letter. I think it was for somebody's birthday present? But yeah, it's not easy to send letters across multiple dimensions of spacetime. I did send a bucket once, though. That was pretty funny. It's hard to explain why to someone who never got to see any of this, but maybe I'll tell you some other time.

Oh, right! I can't believe I didn't think of this until now, but I'm sort of a dad now too! No, not with Rose or Jade or that girl I had a crush on in 3rd grade. Don't worry about that, haha. Rose is actually married now! To another girl, no less. They're really cute together. And Jade... well, it's hard to explain, but turns out she's kinda my sister? But also... my brother's granddaughter, or...? Yeah. Again, story for another letter.

Anyways, my daughter isn't actually, like, biologically related or anything. She's a salamander. We all got our own planets with alien beings on them as part of the game, and she was one of the adorable little things on mine! I named her Casey. You probably already know why. If there's one thing that hasn't changed about me, it's that good ol' Nic Cage still hits me where it hurts. Especially now.

There's this other girl, Jane. You never knew her, but...you also sorta did. She was my grandma - your mom. Crazy, huh? So much weird time stuff has happened over the past few years that I don't know if I could ever explain it all. Anyways, she's pretty cool! She spends most of her time with Roxy - Rose's mom - and Calliope - this nice alien girl(?) we met a little while ago, but she seems nice, and we both hate cakes!



Heh, sorry about that.

She and I have met a lot of your doppelgangers. Sometimes, when one of them is talking behind me, for a second I can forget it's not you. Although...this might sound weird, but I feel like in a way, they're all you. I never used to question my identity much, but when you know there's so many versions of you, all in different timelines, all living different lives, it's simultaneously scary and comforting? Like, none of them are you, but they still sort of branch off from this same person - like there's this essence of you that stretches infinitely across time and space. It's kinda neat.

I like to think it's the same for everybody else, including you. Even if the other yous don't have the same memories or know me the same way you did, they're still Dad - not my dad, not directly, but Dad. They're loving, they're good listeners, they'll hug me when I'm feeling down, and that's all that really matters, isn't it?

Still, sometimes I want to ask them questions I know they don't have the answer to. Sometimes I want them to remember things they never saw or did. Sometimes I want them to be *you* you, so bad that it physically hurts. Then I think of something you told me, so long ago it feels like something I saw in a movie.

I was 10, or maybe 11. You came home from work with a surprise for me; no special occasion, you just saw it at the toy store and knew I'd love it. I was super excited when I saw the bag, but you made me wait until you'd changed out of your work clothes. Then you sat with me in the living room and watched as I ripped it out of the bag - a kid's magic kit. I was over the moon! I played with it for hours, doing all kinds of dumb tricks for you while you picked cards and pretended to be amazed at my natural prowess.

Then I tried to tell you about the hidden compartment in the top hat.

You stopped me before I could speak. You put your hand on my shoulder, and for a minute I was scared I was in trouble. But you just said this: "A magician never reveals his secrets. Knowing how it's done ruins the magic."

I know you didn't mean for that to be life advice - or maybe you



did. Either way, that's how I think of where I am now. Sometimes, I want everything to make sense. I want everyone that looks like you to be the same. I want there to only be one timeline. I want the answers to all my deepest questions, all the things that keep me up at night.

But then Jade comes over and asks if I want to hang out at the park with her and Rose; or Dave calls me and forces me to listen to his shitty freestyling (no, even after thousands of years, it hasn't gotten better) while Karkat yells in the background (how does his throat never get sore?); or I take a scenic walk, somehow end up at Dad's place again, and he invites me in for cake. And that's when I know this is the magic show, all the world's a stage, and I never want it to end.

I think, if you were here, you would have said the same thing.

I love you, Dad. I'll write to you again soon.

Your son, always,

John





















THANKS  
FOR  
PLAYING



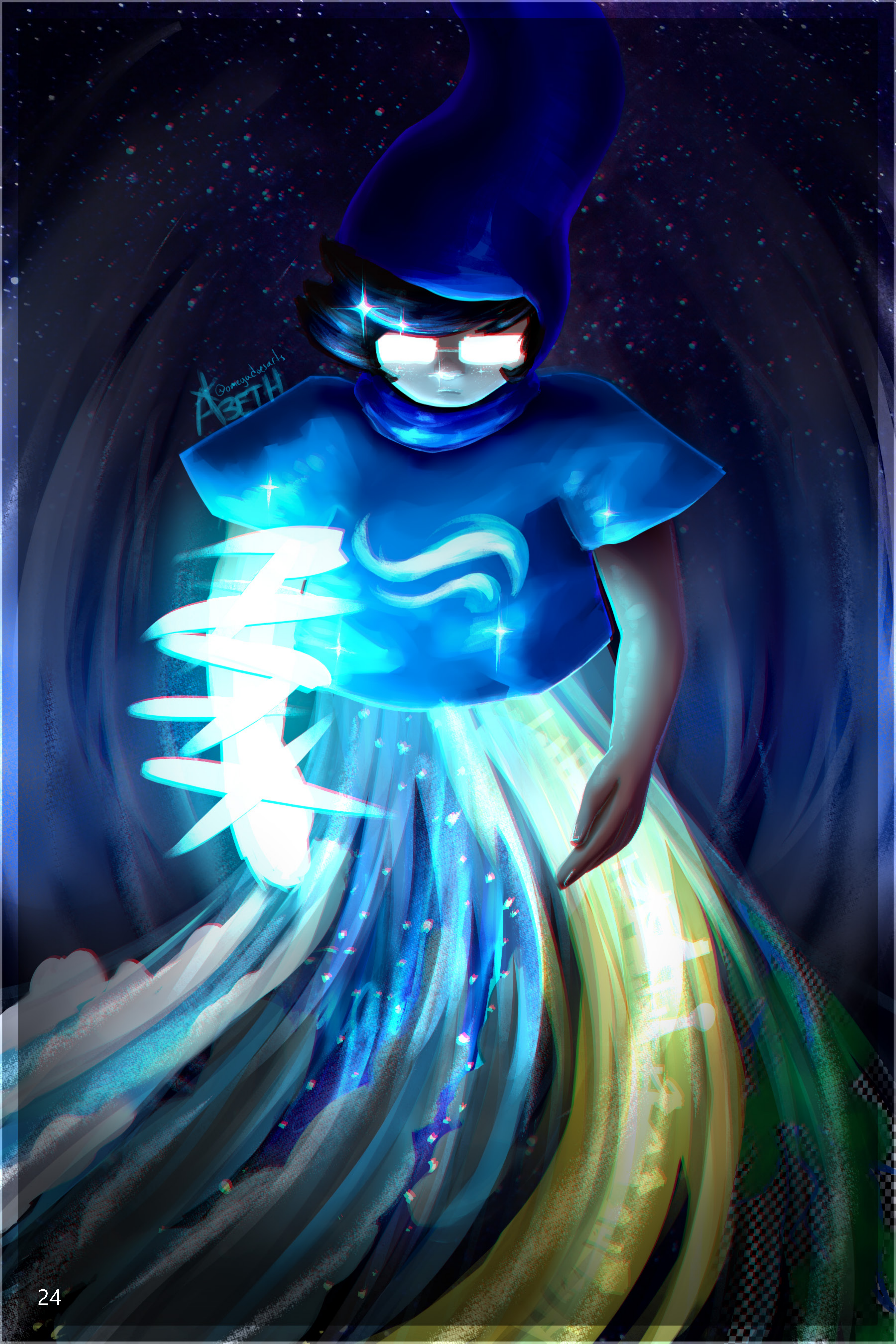
wear your heart on your sleeve.











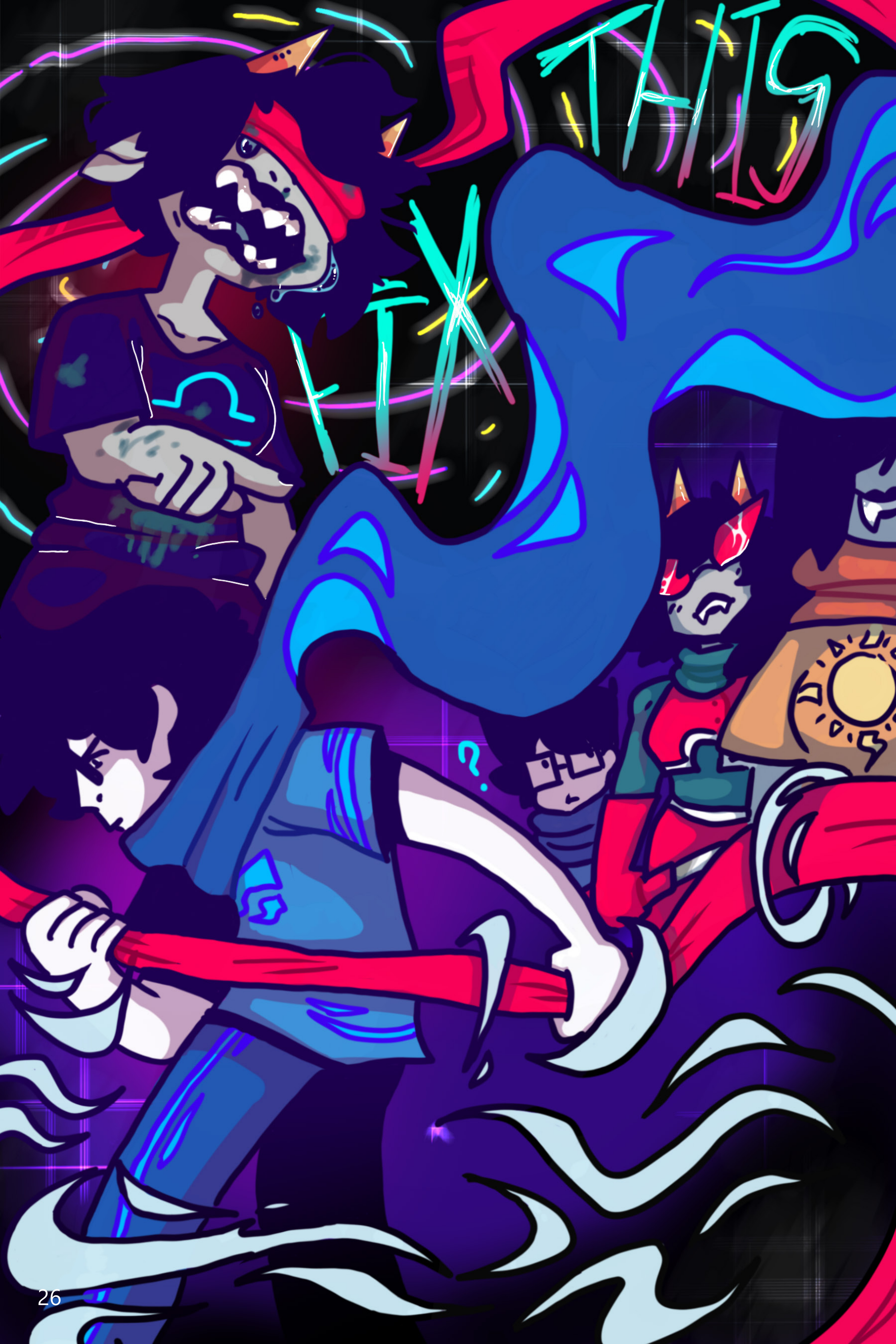
© OmegaDorarts  
ABETH





> JOHN: PLAY THE WIND

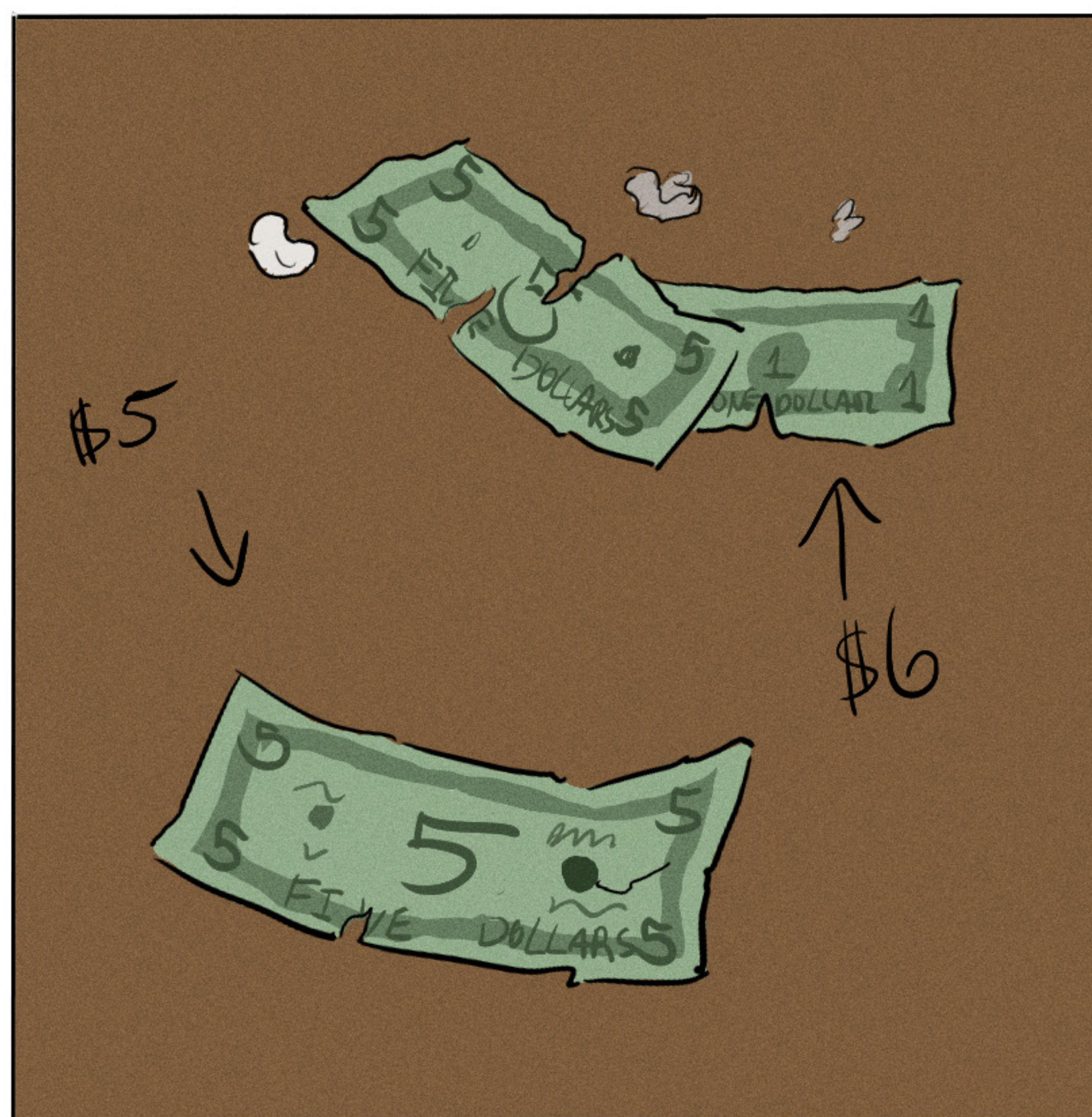














A week later.....

uh,  
rose? i really need  
to head home and  
study...

goddamn it, rose....

ST4Y  
TH3 FUCK STILL  
KARKAT 1 N33D TO  
TIP















## *If One Were to Ask*

by Miramrise

Summary: *If one were to ask at that exact moment, he would decry any and all knowledge of knowing those insane weirdos.*

---

"You can not be serious."

If asked on any average day, John Egbert would happily tell anyone who wanted to know that he adored his friends. He often thought they were better people than he could hope to be in this post-game world. If asked, he could (would, and *has*) go on a long tangent of all their good points, and just kind of joke about their bad ones if they were mentioned. Yes, he really did cherish his friends.

If one were to ask John Egbert at that exact moment, however, he would decry any and all knowledge of these insane weirdos. If asked, he'd simply say they were obviously crazy sociopaths who broke into his home, raided his cabinets, and decided to torture him with the most frustrating board game in existence.

John would forever regret not having the foresight to have chucked his Monopoly game out the window after all was said and done.

"Of course I'm serious, Egbert. Everybody knows you buy the cheap places up first and lay out a street of money-sucking hell and torture. One wrong spot and it's men laid out on the street, pockets and wallets burning in a fiery blaze because oh shit, who knew that cheap purple was gonna have that bitchin' hotel and time to pay the rent—"

Rose chuckled to casually interrupt Dave's long-winded tangent. "I doubt if John was questioning your desire to have Baltic Ave," she pointed out, "merely your method for acquiring it."



One white, fluffy ear twitched on Jade's head. "But are we really surprised by that?" she asked, absently looking over her own properties. "It's Dave we're talking about, after all."

"Touché," conceded Rose. "Though on another note, can I say I appreciate this being one of the original editions where Baltic and Mediterranean are still purple, instead of that 'what were they thinking' brown they used in the later—"

"Guys." John managed to avoid face-palming, despite the most exasperated urge to do so. He wondered for the umpteenth time why he was still friends with them. That and why he had this game to begin with. It wasn't even the current version, as Rose pointed out. Not that John ever wanted one before the original Earth went kablooie; that sad brown colour they tried to use for Baltic and Mediterranean was an insult.

Cheap dark purple forever!

"Guys," he repeated, giving himself a mental slap for his own silent tangent. "Seriously. You don't think his *offer* was a bit *much*?"

Dave threw his hands up in front of himself in mock defense, poker face near perfect. "Hey now. I think even Rose can agree that my offer would be more than adequate compensation." He ignored the slight tick in his eye when he noticed Jade turning to Rose, her staged whisper clearly heard by all of them.

"That sounds like something you'd say."

Rose shrugged a shoulder. "I guess that thesaurus I gave him is being put to good use." She only offered a tepid smile at the glare her ecto-sibling shot her way. "What? Honestly, it was a gamble when you think about it. I was worried about igniting those sick fires of yours again." She blinked at the finger that was thrust into her face.



"You're saying that like those sick fires ever went out. They might dim, maybe even turn into sad little embers floating up in the sky, all lonely and shit because they got separated from the Mama Fire, but just wait into it hits some drywood and next thing you know, you're calling the fire department because we got an absolutely sick *inferno* going on—"

John smacked his thigh hard, getting their attention back. Times like these he considered defecting to the B2 camp, as Dave had called their group of paradox guardians/siblings. Certainly none of *them* would veer so far off the main topic, would they? Well, John couldn't be a hundred percent certain on that, but he thought they had themselves together a lot more than his group, at least.

"Dave, you offered me all your trains, the electric company, and a *blowjob for Baltic!*" John practically shouted.

"Yeah, okay, it might seem like the trains were overkill—"

John could only exhale the most utterly vexed sigh; this felt more and more like a faceslap times two combo moment. "A *blowjob*, Dave, focus." The bespectacled young man held up a hand to forestall another tangent. "Who offers something like *that* in a game of Monopoly—don't answer that!" he yelled quickly, seeing all three opening their mouths to do just that. "I neither care to know, nor care *about* whoever would, because we're talking about us, here, and now." His raised hand was then slapped down hard near the board, though John took care not to displace any of the tokens. He wasn't sure this group wouldn't use the chance to come up with something even more ridiculous than Dave's offer. Though John felt absolutely no desire to even entertain what could top that. The memories would scar him for life.

Speaking of memories, he wondered if Roxy's void powers could work on the mind as well. Maybe she could help him erase his memories of this game and send all thoughts of it to the void, never to bother him again. He'd have to ask. Not to mention, he'd rather run the risk of Roxy



possibly giving him a voided lobotomy than let Terezi do whatever to his brain. He wasn't that far off the rails yet.

*That might only be a matter of time, the longer I hang around this group of nutjobs,* John reasoned to himself.

"Okay, look. No, no. Just... why, Dave? What the fuck, why?" And the longer he pondered on it, the less sense it made. Even as a joke, just...

"No."

"Oh c'mon, Egbert. This is a sweet deal." Dave tapped his three railroads sitting in front of him. "You can get Reading, Pennsylvania, and Short Line. Four spots, bam, instant two hundred every time, all around the board."

He was going to have to nip this one right in the butt. John heaved a deep breath. "I don't want any oral in a trade for a board game deal, Dave", he finally stated, ignoring the faint heat he could feel just under his cheeks. "Just, no."

Instead of that being the end of it, and John really knew that was too optimistic to hope for, Dave tapped his chin a few times as he considered his options. "Fine. Then my rails, electric, Pacific Avenue, and lunch tomorrow on me—dress nice—for Baltic. That's fair, right?"

It puzzled John that nobody commented on the slight *ping* he swore he heard, until he realised the sound was in his mind. The pieces fell together in a way that he wondered if they weren't putting a jigsaw picture together instead of trying to send each other into the figurative poor house.

"Were—are you asking me out?"

"You *did* hear the 'dress nice' part, right?" Dave asked in lieu of a proper



reply. "Get on board with the rest of us here, Egbert. You're gonna tell me this isn't the sweetest Monopoly trade you ever got?"

John refrained from pointing out the myriad of ways the trade was anything but sweet. "And you went in with a *blowjob* of all things, so that the lunch date would seem that much more appealing." John sent a look in Rose's direction, who didn't even have the decency, let alone a single iota of shame, to pretend that wasn't her influence at work. She merely smiled and winked at him.

Not for the first time, John felt Sburb had mixed up Rose and Jade's classes. Rose was definitely a witch type, as far as his opinion went.

The urge to drop his face into his hands was too great, and John did so with the loudest sigh yet. "Was this whole game some kind of setup?" he wondered out loud.

Jade chirped from her place on the floor. "Not at all! I always wanted to play since I never did before. Anything else is all Dave."

One blue eye peeked between John's fingers to give Rose another look, who in turn acquiesced the silent point. "Maybe not all," the seer murmured.

"Not the point, here," Dave said. He waited until John's attention was back on him, then continued. "We didn't even know you had the game until today, so as Rox might say, totes not a setup." Dave waved a hand around to encompass the room. "Besides, we don't get to hang out as much now as we used to chat with each other before, which is a damn shame, I say."

"Here here!" cheered Jade, with Rose nodding next to her.

"And *maybe* I hung out with the light-bright twins—don't even deny Kanaya wasn't glowing, Rose, and that is still ten grades of freaky—



before we all came over here. And *possibly* things were discussed, because conversation is a thing unless you just want to be *that guy* who only comes over to watch someone's TV or raid their fridge and never say more than 'Yo, can I...?' and their off making themselves a sandwich at home except buddy, wrong address—hey!" Dave reached up to rub the sore spot on his head where Rose just whacked him.

"John's eyes were beginning to glaze over," Rose said in the blandest tone she could manage. And how she knew that with his face still resting in his palms, John would have found impressive in any other circumstance.

The heir took a long, mental note of the situation. *Okay, trying to be reasonable is not working, he thought, So I guess I have to let myself fall down to their level of insanity. Jeez, why am I the normal one? Well, as normal as anyone can be here.* He quickly shook himself clear of his own ruminations; John never wanted to be accused of being a hypocrite.

"You know," he said slowly, voice muffled by his hands, "You could have just asked me out like a nor—like a regular person would."

Dave, or 'the jerk who was becoming the bane of John's existence' as the heir was mentally calling him, just shrugged. "Can't say I didn't get your attention."

No, John definitely could *not* say that. Nor could he say he didn't find the whole spectacle just a *teeny* bit charming. After all, he really shouldn't have expected anything less from the Strilonde camp.

John lifted his head to find three sets of eyes (well, two and a pair of shades) intently staring back at him. "Fine," he heaved out, ignoring Jade's enthusiastic fist pump as well as Rose and Dave's unsubtle high-five. "But I expect a nice lunch, and there should be flowers involved."

"Oh, hey, whole works." Dave pulled out his phone and started tapping away. "I can even get a limo if you want the five star treatment."



"Three stars is fine." John refused to acknowledge the returning blush on his face and focused on the game. He noticed the Community Chest card Dave had gotten on his last turn (prior to that scandalous trade offer) and nicked it between his fingers to see what it said. "But as for getting Baltic. I think you're going to have to wait on that."

Dave didn't get the chance to mutter a protest before John shoved the card into his face. Rose and Jade leaned over the blond's shoulders to get a look as well. A second later, Rose smiled while Jade giggled at Dave's crestfallen look. She moved the car token from the Community Chest space to rest in the Jail square instead. Dave looked from his token back up to John.

"Eh, prison time for a date with a windy boy seems fair to me. Just know I'm not dropping the soap. And if it's on the floor, then gravity was at work and I had nothing to do with it. But feel free to pick it up if you want, John."

John let a deep groan leave him. Yet, between Jade's laughter, Rose's smile, and Dave's running commentary, if one were to ask him, John would readily admit his friends were all insane, and he wouldn't have them any other way.















John: Do The Windy Thing











Tell them I  
say hi.









yooo john, u aight fam squad? ya ignorin me or somethin?

**OH, ROXY!** I, uh, I didn't see you there! Hah.. I didn't know you were coming over either. Trust me, I wouldn't be out here doing ...whatever if i know you'd be visiting. Did you like text or...?



Well duuuh! I wanted to surprise ya! give ya a real spook and such.

I didn't think you'd be contemplating existance or whatevs!



You seemed pretty out of it, though! More than I've really noted at least.

You alright, babe?



I... Don't know how convincing it would be if I were to tell you everything was fine





Ahh... one of those days, huh? Yeah, I totes get ya, babe. someting ya just wanna... do nothin'.

I know you're not much of a feelings guy but... you wanna talk about it?



sigh....

Well, I don't see why not. I mean, you're probably the only person who would really get where I'm coming from, actually

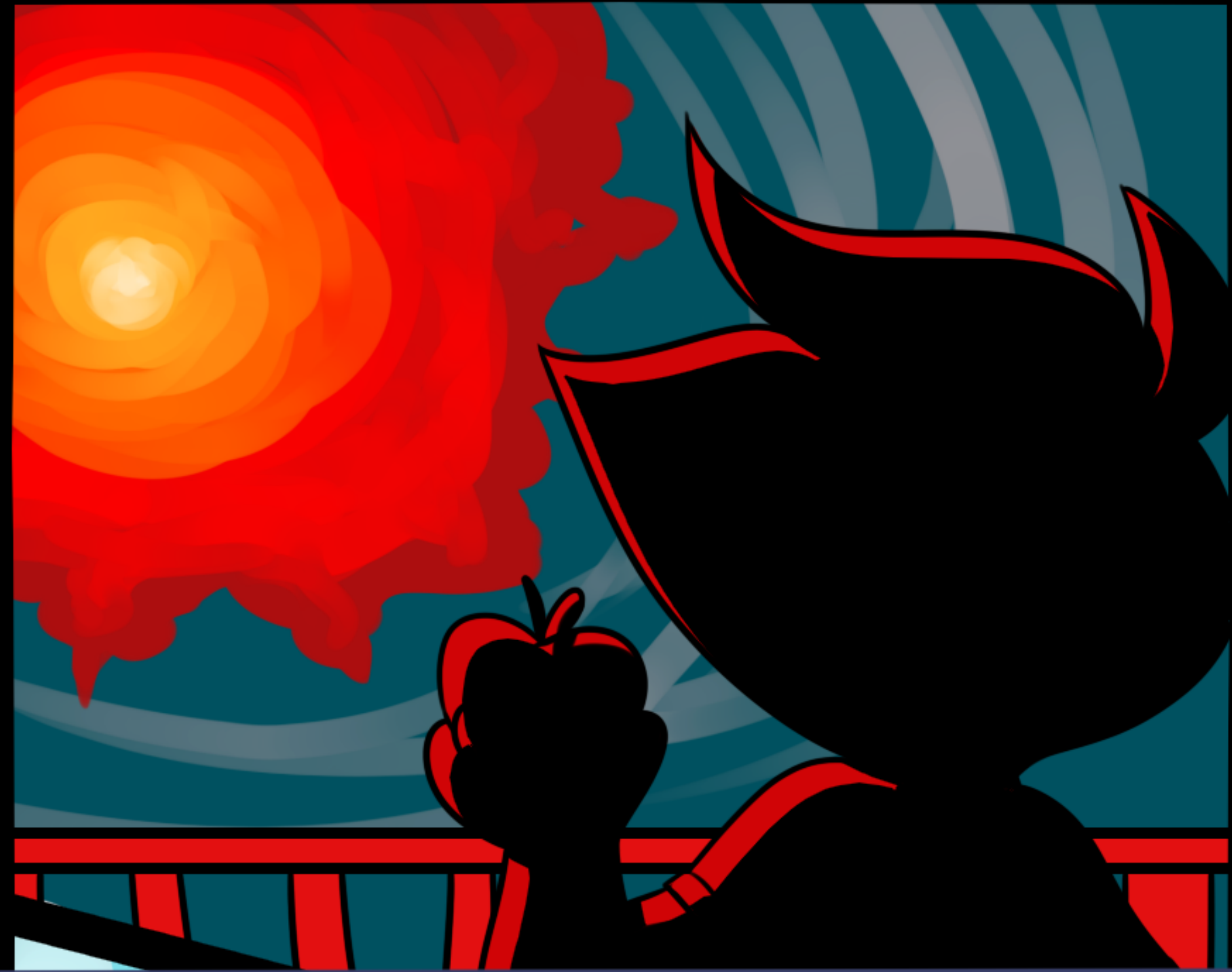


Sooo... What's alling you, egberto? What can your best buddo dear, sweet, precious roxlal do for ya? I know Rose is usually the group therapist, but I am her mom so I probs know a thing or two!

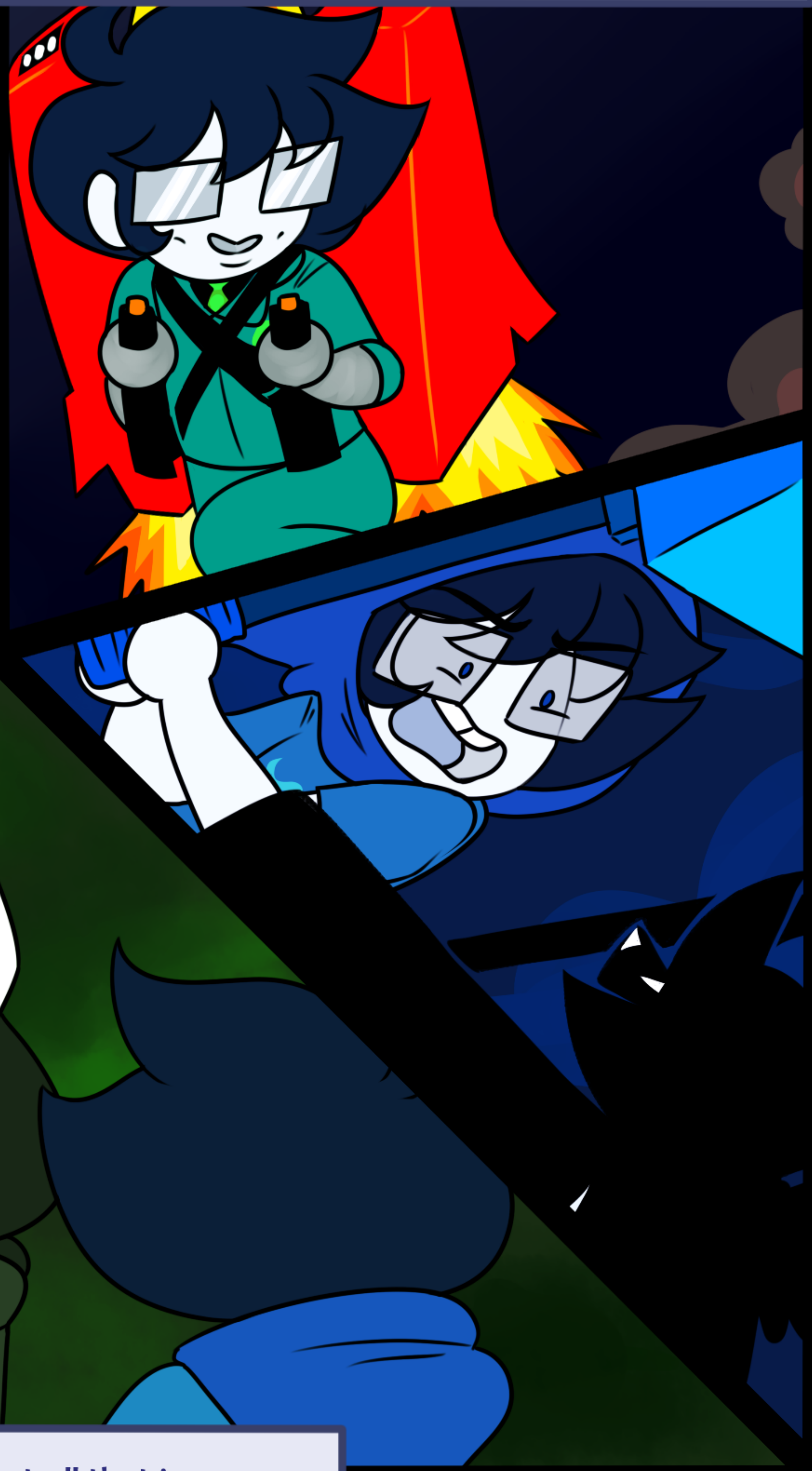


God, I don't know. I guess I've just been thinking a lot as of late. I've been thinging about, well, everything. It's getting pretty close to my birthday, which means a lot of things. I'll be 23 and it'll be 10 years since I started playing that game. You can probably tell why I'm so... shaken up.

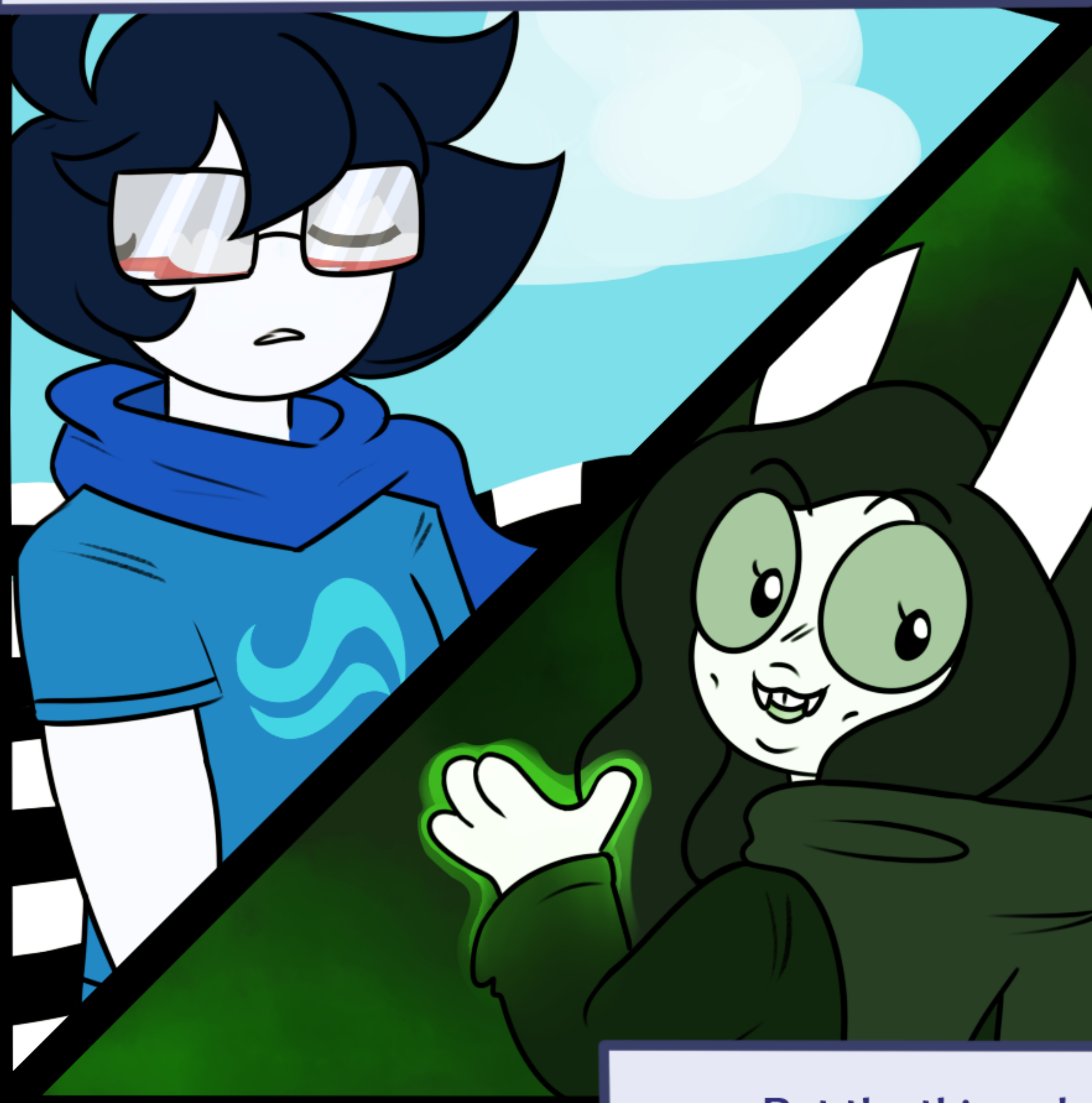




I played that game so long ago, but I can remember just about everything so vividly. It feels unreal...



It changed so much about my life, for better or for worse. It let me meet my friends, and make a new universe for everyone to live in happily.



But the thing about all that is...



It never really mattered in the end!



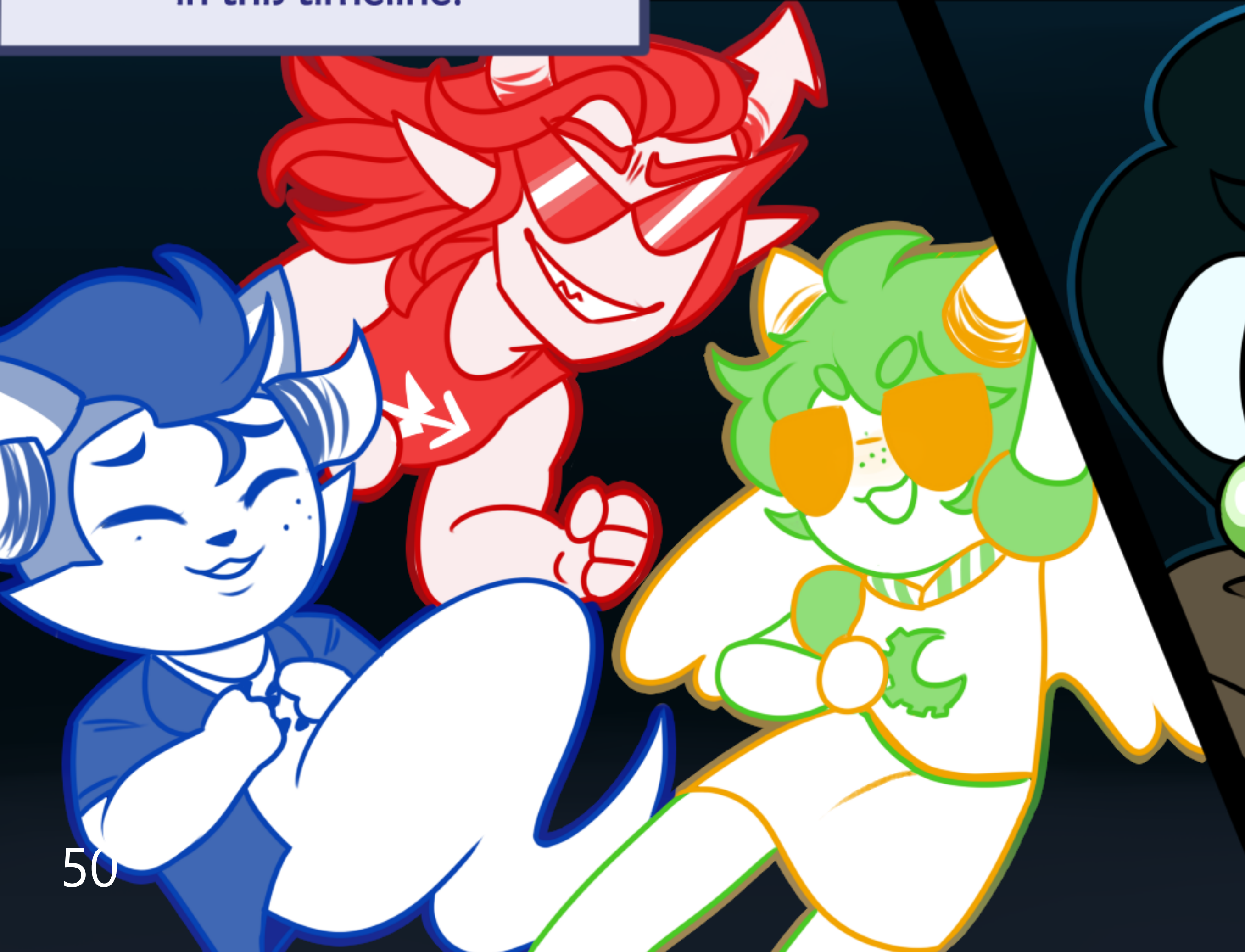
Everyone that I know...  
isn't from MY timeline!



I'm not THEIR John! I may look like him,  
but I don't share their memories!



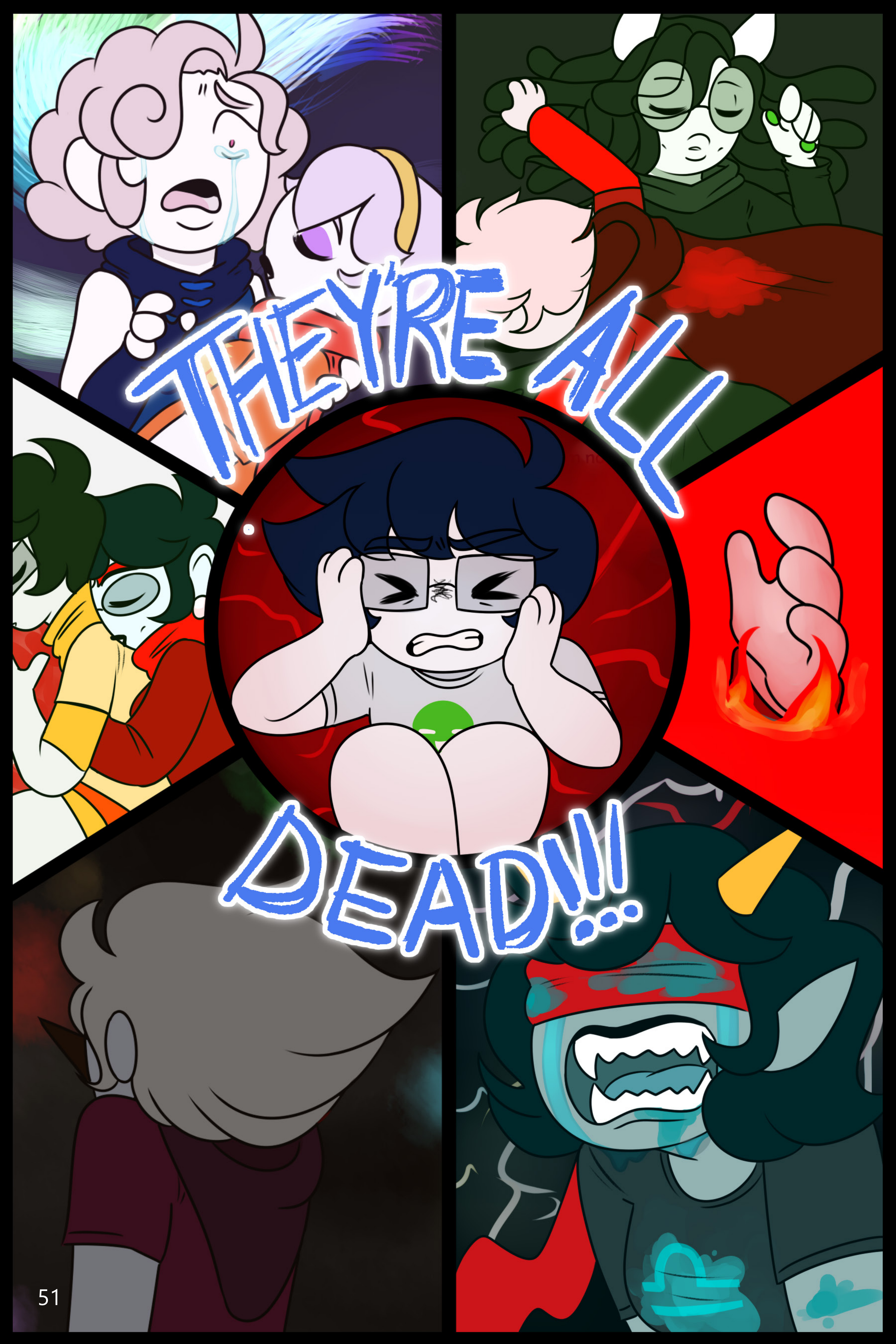
I'm not theirs! I... I don't belong  
in this timeline!



My friends... they're...  
they're-







THEY'RE ALL

DEAD!!





I feel like I should be happy! I should be grateful that I get to see them at all! Yet.... I feel like I somehow cheated to get here. How convenient it that you and I died in their timelines just so we could manage to squeeze into it as if nothing happened at all?



I'm sorry, It's just.... It feels way too convenient for me to feel okay with.



I've never had to talk about my problems, and talking about it now makes me feel like a pest. I've dealt with it alone for so long, why talk about it now, over 3 years later?

I can't even feel excited about my birthday anymore! Everytime I think about it, I think about my dad, and what I used to have. I don't have anything to celebrate anymore! It just feels to hollow...









I know I'm not a real professional or something, but... I can relate a lil!



Like you said, I might be the only gal that 100% can relate to all of that. I'm really glad you told me about... well everything!

I mean, saying that what you're going through is intense is the understatement of the god damn century. That game was nuts for everyone involved. Seein all your friends just... die in front of you and then just popping into this timeline? It's a bit disconcerting. I know seeing Rose was pretty... lifechanging. It was hard to adjust after something like that, and I felt exactly like you did. Still do, if I'm being honest. I was so used to being the girl that kept all my pal together. Being sad felt like I was somehow letting them down. But... I learned something important!







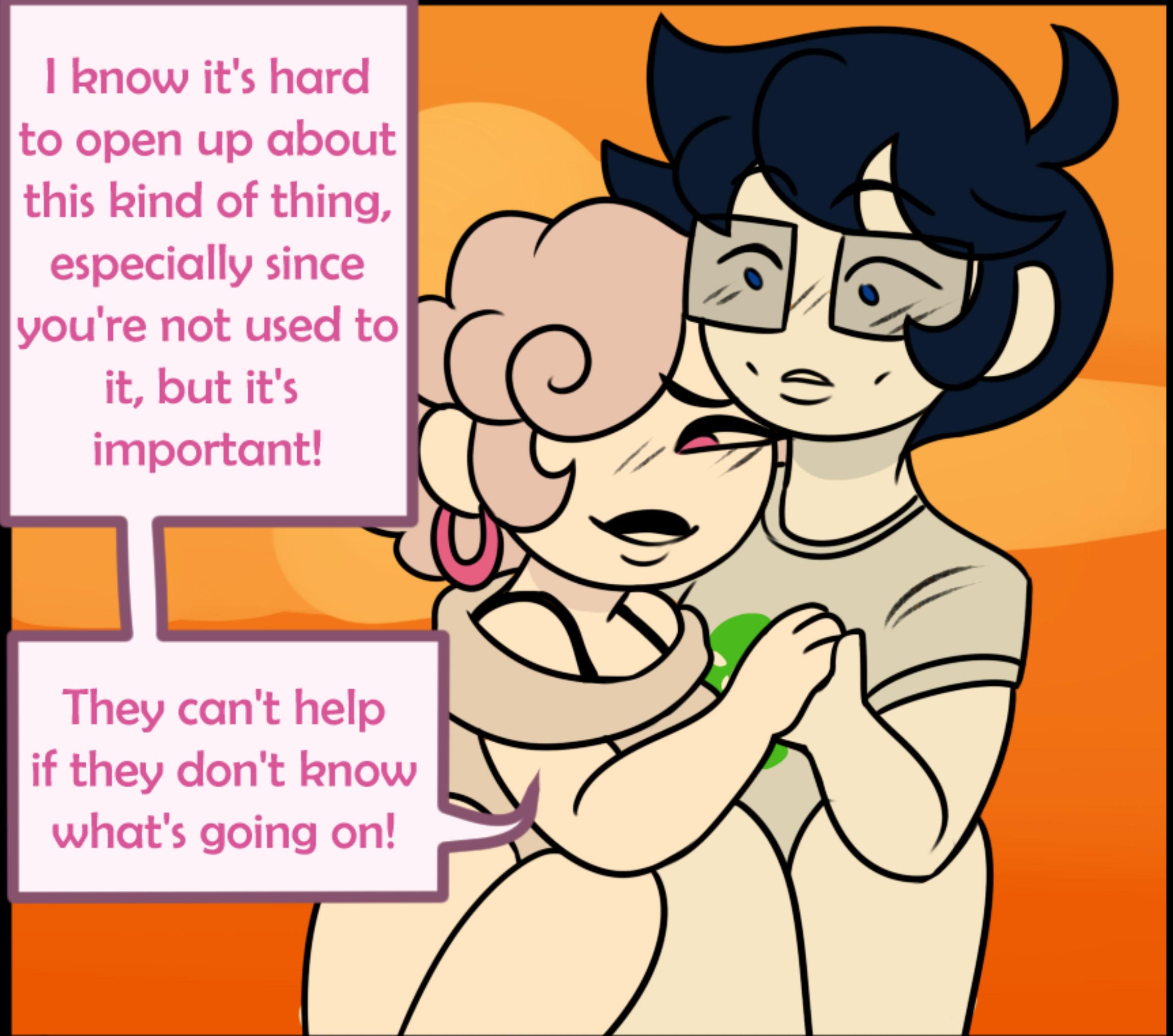
Your friends... care about you, John!



If they're really your friends, they'll listen!



They'll tell you how much you matter to them! I know you matter to me! ♡♡



I know it's hard to open up about this kind of thing, especially since you're not used to it, but it's important!

They can't help if they don't know what's going on!



But, until then...

Your ol gal Rox Lal is here for you. Whether you want it or not, hehe.



Hehe...Thanks, Roxy. I really needed that.

THE  
END!









EB: you can see me, right.

EB: tell me what is wrong  
with this picture















*It picks you up and turns you around*

by Cameron Rose

"You are literally the cutest thing ever."

John lay on his stomach, legs kicking, chin perched in his hands, as Casey blew another whimsical bubble. His eyes sparkled in the way they only could when a man looked at his unofficially adopted daughter. The light of the land beneath and around them embraced them warmly, and the breeze kissed his cheek, ruffling his hair affectionately before drifting lazily off to the next field over.

He blinked like a cat to its human - slow, deliberate, his eyelids beating to the pulse of the rocks on either side of him. Casey was unfazed, rolling onto her back carelessly as she flapped her jaws in contentment. John laughed, the notes dancing into the wind. He then copied Casey, rolling onto his back and grinning widely at her.

He'd heard once that humans actually saw everything upside down, and their brains just turned things right side up for them. It sounded silly, but he had a hard time disbelieving anything at the moment. He wondered idly how Casey saw the world. He didn't know anything about salamander vision; was she colorblind? If so, what type? Did she see everything upside down?

"Y'know, sometimes I really wish we could talk to each other."

He laughed again, turning back over onto his stomach. Casey rolled onto her stomach, her head at an impossible angle as she stared at him, and he laughed harder, only to completely lose his shit when she hopped back up onto her feet, flapping her jaws in delight and letting bubbles loose with wild abandon. His chest was wind and starlight; his laughter lifted the fireflies to a frenzied dance. He cackled for a solid minute or two before eventually catching his breath, the air lovingly caressing his lungs.

"Well, you seem to like when I laugh. That's a start, right?"

Casey stared as always, but this time John felt a wordless exchange, something indescribable that traced across his back and brought him peace. He felt his worries like folded wings, massive and heavy and pathetically limp; but as he gazed into deep brown salamander eyes,



they were torn, feather by feather, and lifted into the wind, not to be seen for a long, long while. Ironically, he felt like he could break from the ground and float away at any moment along with them.

He broke eye contact, staring in awe at the ever-tempestuous sky, then to the horizon, just as restless, just as alive. The whole planet felt like it was waiting for something, but also like it could wait forever. John couldn't explain the part of him that stirred just looking at it; he just... knew. It was a feeling he hadn't known since he'd looked up to a different sky, one that might not even exist anymore(?), to see the apocalypse raining fire down on the only city he'd ever known. Here - despite what he had lost, what he still couldn't quite comprehend was actually gone - his heart beat in time with firefly wings, and his blood was his breath. Here, at least for now, was where he belonged.

He looked back to Casey, wondering if maybe, in some special place in her tiny lizard heart, she felt it too.

Casey blew another bubble.

John smiled.



















*did i make you cry on your birthday*

by Natalia Fairchild

JOHN EGBERT, 23 years old young man, aspiring comedian and depressed fuck, knew something was wrong from the moment he went down the stairs of his empty house and found that all of his eggs had a caricature of his face drawn on them.

He took one egg and softly pated the black marker, thinking that he had sleepwalked and done creppy things again (he took three consecutive days to wash off the grey facepaint he somehow had all over his body, even though he did not own any facepaint tube in his humble home). The marker stucked black to his thumb, and he frowned.

Okay then... . Memories of the creppy harlequins all over his home, of his gigantic hammer (still safely kept in his Sylladex) and how fierce and reckless he used to be 10 years ago overwhelmed him. This was not happening again. He was too old for this.

But still... the thrill of having to fight your way up, the excitement of having a pure purpose, not dragging your body around like a mass of useless weight all day, made John miss those times more each day that passed.

Eggs. His caricatured face on them, with his glasses, big teeth and black hair. Who could have done that?

His stomach grumbled; food first, questions later, as his father used to say, piling up cakes in front of his door. His father used to say a lot of things. John looked over to the fridge door, where the picture of his father was framed, some stickers from Jane and Jade from their previous visits around it.

How many times do you need to be remembered to cook the eggs? I swear I will cook the Egg-bert out of you if you don't hurry up.



John startled at the sound of my voice. God, okay. It will not work this way. Let us just slide into his perspective for a second.

Your name is JOHN EGBERT. You are a 23 year old young gentleman, and today is THE 13TH OF APRIL, the day you were born. You used to throw PARTIES with your many FRIENDS but now they have gone on with their lives and you were left SAD AND ALONE.

You woke up, washed your face, winked cheekily at your reflection and went downstairs in the kitchen. There, you found that all your eggs have your caricatured face drawn on them. You have been staring at one of them for 10 minutes now, John. You had better get started with your day.

Two John-eggs and a glass of orange juice later, you stare blankly at your plate. Today is your birthday. This day, 10 years ago, you started playing a computer game which saved you from the end of the world and lead to the construction of a brand new universe created by you and your friends.

It appears that they took their role seriously, though. Your grandmother who is actually your mother and to whom you were father and grandfather in a parallel universe is the CEO of a company. Your best friend, your sister and their... you don't really know... something with quadrants.. friend live to explore and watch bad tv shows, but they are together. Your other best friend and her wife take care of babies all day. You are alone.

The sun is up. You know that because you are watching out the window. You realize the sun is up. You watch.

Your phone rings, and you don't want to mention how fast you grab it, craving for some human, or troll, interaction.

Snapchat pops up with notifications and you smile that toothy grin of



yours. You realize how much you resemble the eggs, but you don't really care.

Dave, your best mate, sent you a picture of a tree. It's a beautiful tree. It has branches. You look at the tree. It doesn't change. That mildly dissapoints you.

Rose, your other best mate, sent a picture of a window. It's just a window. The sun is getting in, only mildly, but it looks very artistic. The photo doesn't change. You appreciate it. It's a beautiful photo.

Jade, your sister, sent a photo of a white dog. A GOOD BOY!! SUCH A GOOOOD BOYYYY!!!! You don't really like dogs. They remind you of your enemy. You appreciate your sister's appreciation for dogs, though.

Karkat, your FRIEND?, sent you a picture of a shoe. It's a shoe. It's white. There is no other shoe. It's in a foot. That's a normal snap from him.

Nobody wished you happy birthday. You think they are putting up a surprise for you, like they did some years ago... but your 22nd birthday consisted in a few birthday bitmojis and Jade with a cake at your house.

You turn on your coffee machine and watch as the beans brew. This is your life. You sometimes watch movies. Other times you go on the porch and watch the clouds moving, the sun raising and the wind slowly keeping the nature living. You love the outsides.

Maybe you should go there now. Your phone is buzzing, so you take a picture on Snapchat of the machine with a bitmoji of you bathing in a coffee cup. You send it to all of your friends. After eight clicks, you put your phone down and fill a cup with the burning liquid.

Outside the sun is barely rising. The heat coming off of your mug and on your face is making you sweat, but the soft breeze in your black hair is making up for it.



The sound of movement startles you. There is somebody in your yard. You place your coffee on the stairs in front of your home and go investigate. The rush in your veins makes you buzz. Finally, finally something real.

There is a tree in your yard. Someone is behind the tree. It seems like multiple people are out there. They are shooshing each other, but you can hear them.

Somehow, a hammer manifests itself in your hand. You grin before you can hold back the tremble of your lips. Adrenaline, life, wind, action. Reality.

You raise the hammer with a war cry and hit the person hiding behind the tree. A BOING is heard. You watch as the person falls to the ground. Wait.

This is your dumbass shade-wearing friend.

"What are you even doing John Dumbert?" someone shouts, and you look at them. It is one of your grey skinned asshole mates.

"I've seen life. And death. And it all starts and ends with that fucking hammer."

"Dave!! What are you doing, lying on the ground there? We haven't even gotten inside yet, I'm sure you can postpone your existential crisis with a couple of minutes."

And there comes your lovely sister. You have hell of a place to hide behind that tree. You are as surprised as they are.

"What are you all doing here?"

Karkat is now laying on the ground, and Dave is holding his hand. You think it would have been romantic if Dave's face was not cringed in pain and Karkat didn't look like an angry grey potato.



Jade, sweet, pure Jade, is looking behind her. You look too. There is nobody there. Before asking, somebody throws their whole body at you.

"JOHNNY JOHNNY YES PAPA!!!!!!!" a voice exclaims, more screech than shout.

"Chill down, Tez. He hasn't even had his coffee yet."

"Terezi..." you say, dumbfounded. Terezi hasn't been home in years. The last time you have seen her she was in search of the girl who saved them all. "But that means..."

"You know what it means. VRISKA IS IN THE HOUSE BITCHEZZZ" Vriska goes to give you and Terezi a hug, but her troll strenght makes her almost choke the life out of you.

"Did I hit my head that hard?" asks Dave, and Karkat shooshes him with a hand in his hair.

"Vriska..." Jade says, and looks between Karkat and Dave. "It's been too long."

"Thought you got rid of me, minion?" says Vriska, ignoring the embarrassed Jade and advancing towards Karkat. You extract yourself as swiftly as possible. "I'm like the plague."

"But hotter." announces Terezi and goes next to her girlfriend while the spider troll is crouched to the ground, ruffling Karkat's wild hair.

You don't know what the fuck is going on. Why is everybody in your backyard. What are they all doing here. Why...

"Is this some kind of weird birthday gift?"

"You bet your ass it is." said Terezi and slapped your ass.



"Did you like the eggs? It was my idea!!" Jade announces and you look at her, bamboozled.

All of your friends are here. Vriska is here. Terezi is here. Your sister and her weird roommates. Everybody came here for you. It is the first time in maybe a year when more than two friends come over to your house at once.

You feel so warm. You feel like the sun is suddenly brighter, like the world has slowed down just a little more and you can see every edge as if you have all the time in the world.

You feel like life is just a little kinder to you than usual. You feel like this is a chance; a chance to make it all better.

"Thank you." you say, before stopping yourself. "For coming over. It's very nice of you."

"And you haven't seen anything yet!" Jade says and takes your hand. She gives you a once-over and scoffs. "Go change into something fancier.

The dorks on the grass can come with you." she points at Karkat and Dave and you smile, so wide you'd think you could swallow the universe.

"And, John?"

You look back at her in a question and she has softens her eyes. "Don't sound like the fact that we came over is the best thing that has ever happened to you. Today is a day for celebration."

You will not cry on your birthday. You will not cry on your birthday. You will not.. you choke back a cry, but no tears are shed.

Dave gets up and Karkat makes a guttural sound. The best glasses dude hugs you. You hug back. It's a bro hug. You missed them so much.



Karkat watches you from afar. He seems done, but nods at you. You want to push him down a friendly patch of grass.

"Let's get you fixed up, Johnny."

"Thank you, Dave. Thank you all."

\*

Half an hour, a pain in the ears from all of Karkat's shouting and a green suit later, you and your two mates get into the back yard.

First, you notice the fancy attires of Vriska, Terezi and Jade. They are wearing dresses, and it seems like Terezi and Vriska have the same model on different colors, teal and cerulean blue. Jade has her shiny, black dress, with the bits that look like parts of constellations on them. Her dress looks like you pressed your hands to your eyes and saw right where you were coming from, the darkness and the light and the colors dancing on the back of your eyelids.

You press your hands to your eyelids. Everybody is looking at you funny. Good job making a fool of yourself, Johnny Boy.

As you walk deeper in the garden you notice that the people in the front yard were not your only guests. You see Callie and Roxy near a patch of burned grass, and you remember the disastrous dinner from two years ago and cringe. Kanaya and Rose are sitting together, laying on the fence, watching the clouds. Rose is wearing a dark, purple suit, and Kanaya a beautiful, jade goan that shows her glowing legs.

Jade takes your hand and leads you in the middle of the garden. When she turns to you, the toothy grin that a lot of people tease you about is making the corners of her lips turn up.

"Okay. I know this will sound strange but... look up."



It does not sound strange. Nothing does with them around. You look... and there are tables floating high above the ground, circular and full of all kinds of foods. You open your mouth in a gasping gesture as you see the little yellow sparkles flying around the white tablecloth.

"Fireflies!!" somebody exclaims, but you don't look at them. Your friends did this for you. Your friends care about you...

"Happy Birthday to you."

You look around. Jane is floating down, a huge, blue cake in her hands.

"Happy Birthday to you."

Jake and Dirk appear out of nowhere, holding hands, and Jake's head is on Dirk's shoulder.

"Happy birthday dearest John"

Everybody is singing. They are circling around you, arms extended and ready for hugs, voices sweet with pleasure.

You will not cry. Everybody is around Jane now, some of them holding the cake with her. They are all smiling. Your body is all heated up. You will probably explode.

"Happy birthday to you."

You are crying.

"Took you long enough to notice me" you say between sobs. Dave appears in front of you, and the naughty grin on his face makes you want to back away.

"But we are here now. And so is the cake."



Dave pushes the cake in your face. From afar, you hear Roxy laughing her ass off, and Vriska saying "In YOUR face". Karkat mumbles something about wasting food on no ones.

You love your friends. Maybe you don't see them every week, or month, or year. But you know they are there. You know that if you decide to leave the country and go travel the world they will support you. You know that if they will need somebody to blow their roofs off, for whatever reason, you will be there.

You look around, eyes heavy with bits of cake. Jade, Dave and Rose are sitting together. You point your look at them. It's been ten years since the end of the world. It's been ten years since all of you went into this adventure together.

You all have come so far. You are proud of yourself. You are proud of your friends. And you are happy that all of them are here.

Jane appears with another cake and smiles. "I made like 30 of these. Hope you don't mind, deary."

You shake your head. "No. That's what I am accustomed to, anyway."

For the rest of the night, you and your friends dance, laugh and listen to Vriska's stories about the universe and Terezi's heroic salvation of her butt. You feel so alive, you think you will die. But it's worth it, because you are with your amazing friends.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY, JOHN!





JOHN



HAPPY



23rd!!



EGBERT









JOHN EGBERT































trick  
&  
treat

AKKOSTRINEK

















THANKS  
FOR PLAYING

Kazuo  
Ch



# ARTIST CREDITS



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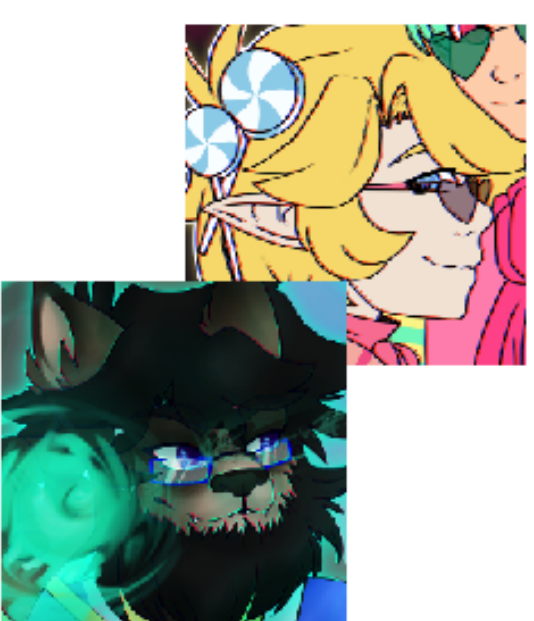
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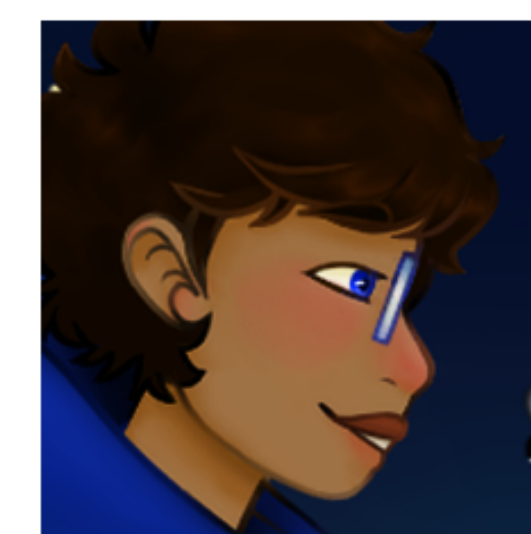
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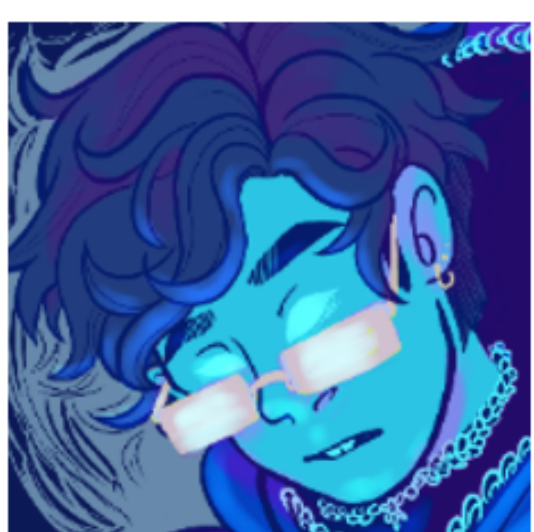
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## Infini

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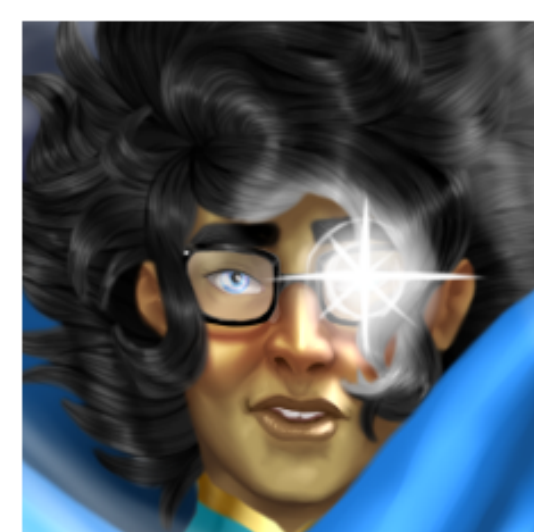


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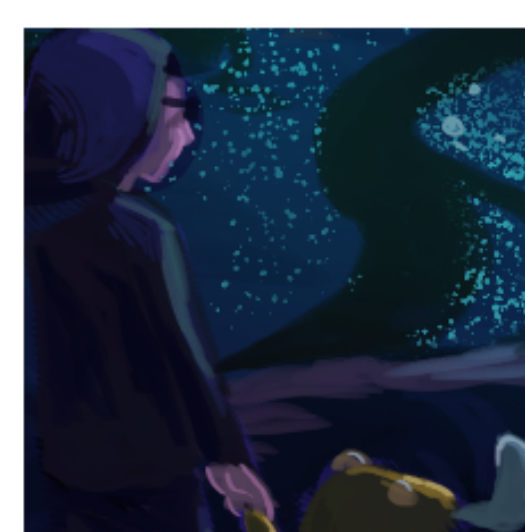
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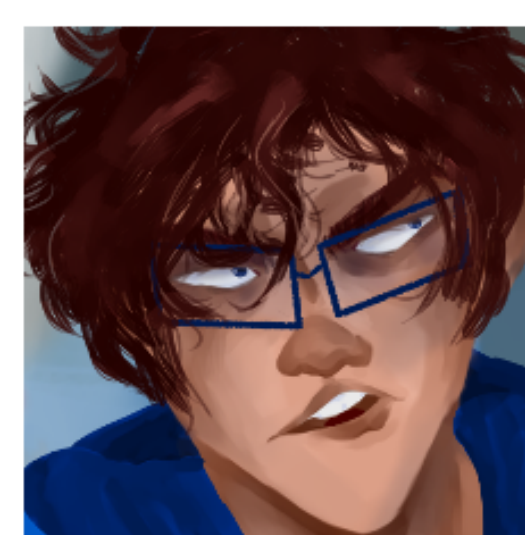


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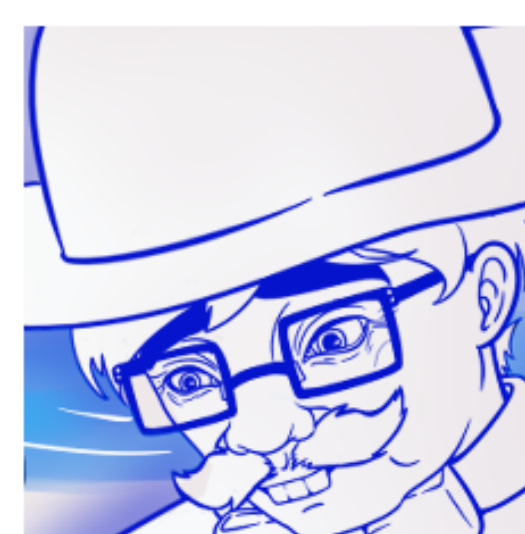


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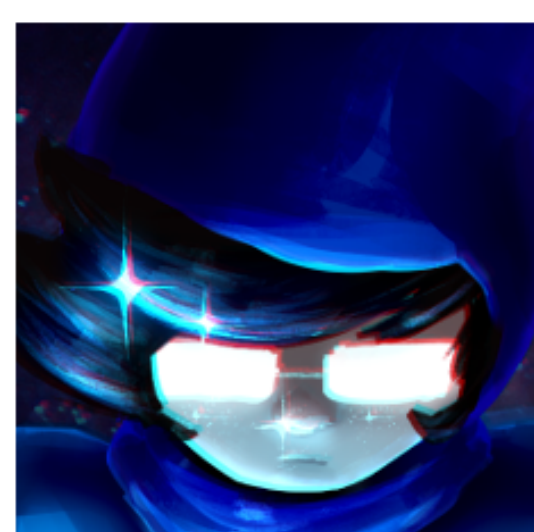
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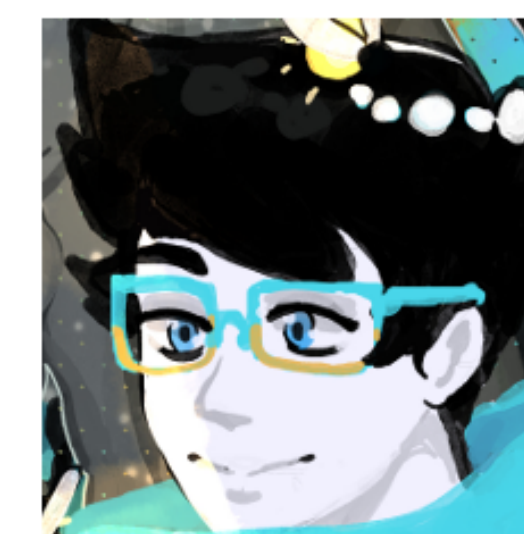
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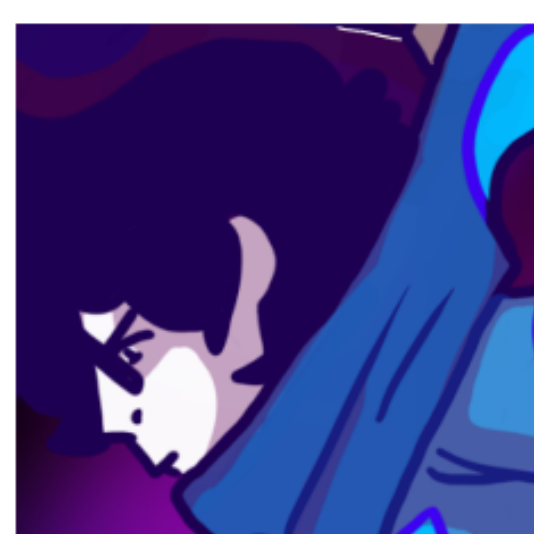
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# WRITER CREDITS

## Cameron Rose

“John: Write a letter”

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“It picks you up and turns you around”

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“If One Were To Ask”

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## Natalia Fairchild

“did i make you cry on your birthday”

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